

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A digital contents rental system comprising:

a portable recording medium which contents are stored in;

a download apparatus which is managed by a rental agent and has an internal storage unit, which a plurality of contents are stored in beforehand, the download apparatus downloading the internal contents to said recording medium in compliance with a command from a user or a staff member; and

an adaptor which reads the contents stored in said recording medium and outputs them to a display device, the adaptor being provided at the user's home.

2. The digital contents rental system as described in Claim 1, wherein said download apparatus writes a rental period in said recording medium in compliance with a command from said user or staff member; and

said adaptor prohibits output outside said rental period when outputting the contents stored in said recording medium to said display device.

3. The digital contents rental system as described in Claims 1, wherein said download apparatus writes a number of permissible copies in said recording medium in compliance with a command from said user or staff member; and

said adaptor prohibits copies exceeding the number of permissible copies when copying the contents stored in said recording medium to an outside storage unit.

4. The digital contents rental system as described in Claims 2, wherein said download apparatus calculates a rental fee for the contents in accordance with said rental

period.

5. The digital contents rental system as described in Claims 3, wherein said download apparatus calculates a rental fee for the contents in accordance with said number of permissible copies.

6. The digital contents rental system as described in Claim 1, wherein said download apparatus calculates a rental fee in accordance with the type of contents.

7. The digital contents rental system as described in Claim 1, wherein advertisement images are stored beforehand in said internal storage unit of said download apparatus, and said download apparatus writes said advertisement images together with the contents to said recording medium.

8. The digital contents rental system as described in Claim 7, wherein said download apparatus calculates the rental fee for the contents in accordance with the number of advertisement images which were written to said recording medium.

9. The digital contents rental system as described in Claim 1, wherein said download apparatus calculates the total number of rentals of each content, and the rental agent who manages said download apparatus pays a fee for using the contents to a contents supplier in compliance with said total number of rentals.

10. The digital contents rental system as described in Claims 3, wherein said download apparatus calculates the total number of permissible copies of each content,

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and the rental agent who manages said download apparatus pays a fee for using the contents to a contents supplier in compliance with said total number of permissible copies.

11. The digital contents rental system as described in Claims 7, wherein said download apparatus calculates the total number of times each of said advertisement images was written, and the rental agent who manages said download apparatus sends an advertisement fee invoice to an advertisement image supplier in compliance with said total number of times said advertisement images was written.

12. The digital contents rental system as described in Claim 1, wherein said recording medium comprises a magnetic disk apparatus.